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Spotlight on a SPAR

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Spotlight On A

SPAR



WHEN Ensign Dorothy E. Stewart, '28, of the Coast Guard SPARS was a landlubber home economics major at Iowa State, she never dreamed she would trade a kitchen for a galley or say "mess" instead of dinner.

She hasn't actually gone to sea herself, but she's skipper of the Cooks and Bakers School at the SPAR training station at the Biltmore Hotel, Palm Beach, Florida, whose graduates replace Coast Guard cooks on shore stations all the way from Miami to Seattle, and free the men for sea duty.

Miss Stewart's decision to join one of the women's reserves of the armed forces was due to a patriotic urge to be of direct service to her country in wartime. She also wished to obtain experience outside the teaching field.

In 1931, she took her M.A. degree at the University of California, Berkeley. She taught foods and dietetics at the Phineas High School, Wilmington, Calif., and

at the time of her enlistment was on the faculty of Susan Dorsey High School, Los Angeles, where she taught science and foods and nutrition.

Started last June, the Cooks and Bakers School had graduated more than a hundred in the first eight months. Its present quota is 125 to 150 additional girls, including those now in school. Length of the training period is 12 weeks, and trainees are divided into two sections. Girls with college courses in home economics and training or experience in institution management are given training in supervision and management of a Coast Guard mess, in addition to the regular Cooks and Bakers course. These girls graduate with a rating of Ship's Cook, 2nd class (Commissary Steward) and are sent to SPAR messes to understudy a Coast Guard Commissary Steward before taking complete charge of the galley.

Members of the second group seldom have had foods training or experience. It is Miss Stewart's task to transform musicians, clerks, butchers and primary teachers into efficient cooks and bakers. Girls from such diverse civilian occupations have one thing in common, however, a desire to do a vital and essential job for the Coast Guard.

A student SPAR, who will soon replace a cook on a shore station somewhere in this country, serves Ensign Stewart



Appetizing and attractive meals must be cooked and served on schedule seven days a week. Commissary Steward trainees plan meals, purchase food and supply recipes and work plans, as well as supervise food preparation by cooks and bakers.

During their last two weeks as trainees, cooks and bakers stand watches in the General Mess for enlisted personnel at the training station. Under the direction of the Coast Guard Commissary Steward, the girls learn food preparation on a vast scale. Approximately 6,000 meals are prepared and served each day.

The goal of the Cooks and Bakers School is to supply graduates to take over all SPAR messes throughout the country to release Coast Guardsmen.